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*Photo by MC2 Anthony Spiker*

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## ***The Talon***

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## **Engineers triumph!**

As the amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1), glides into San Diego Bay, Machinist Mate First Class Dariamie Jackson and Chief Machinist Mate Jack Hunt, hoist a broom up the mast Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>, symbolizing the engineers 'clean sweep' during the Engineering Operational Certification (EOC). For the past 3 months, Tarawa's Engineering Department underwent a grueling engineering readiness assessment by the Pacific Fleet's Afloat Training Group. Tarawa passed the final tests with "Above Average" grades, which is the highest possible classification.

# ***CO's Thanksgiving Day Message 2006***

***This Thanksgiving, Tarawa joins Americans everywhere in giving thanks for the many blessings we enjoy as citizens of this great Nation.***

***Those freedoms for which we give thanks; however, came about only through tremendous sacrifice. Nearly 400 years ago, the Pilgrims inaugurated Thanksgiving after surviving the first harsh winter at Plymouth. George Washington proclaimed the first national day of Thanksgiving during the early struggles of the republic, and Abraham Lincoln later revived the tradition following the dark days of the Civil War.***

***On this Thanksgiving Day, we are again engaged in a great struggle, this time against terrorists who threaten the values we hold so dear. Like those who served our Navy before you, a new generation of courageous Sailors continue the noble tradition of service to the Nation. To each of you in uniform, I am thankful for your dedication and selflessness. Many will pause on this special day, and give thanks for the freedom your service makes possible.***

***On this special holiday, a day when duty will keep many of you away from home and loved ones, my wife Lisa joins me in sending you and your families our best wishes for a happy Thanksgiving.***

***Donald R. Shunkwiler, Captain, U.S. Navy, Commanding Officer USS TARAWA sends***

# Big “T” changes command



*By MC2(SW/AW) Rich Perez  
USS Tarawa Public Affairs*

USS TARAWA, At Sea (NNS) — It was the end of one tour of duty and the beginning of another aboard USS Tarawa (LHA 1), when Capt. Donald Shunkwiler relieved Capt. Peter Murphy as commanding officer of the “Big T” during a change of command ceremony Sept. 28.

The ceremony took place aboard Tarawa while at sea in the Southern California operations area,

AT SEA ABOARD USS TARAWA-Capt. Donald Shunkwiler is flanked by Capt. Peter Murphy during a change of command ceremony at sea aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1), Sept. 28, as the ship undergoes training in the Southern California Operational area. Photo released. **Photo by MC3 Kelly Morgan.**

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as the crew prepares for its next major deployment.

“The ship has truly excelled and there has been no greater champion for its crew and mission than Capt. Murphy,” Shunkwiler said. “It is an honor to take command. We will continue to be combat ready and I am thrilled to serve here.”

During the ceremony, Murphy and Shunkwiler, flanked by the crew and guests, reported the turn over of command to Capt. Jonathan Picker, commander, Amphibious

Squadron 1, in a brief ceremony on the ship’s flight deck. Shunkwiler becomes the 20th commanding officer, of Tarawa.

Shunkwiler assumed command of USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) in April 2001 again deploying to the Persian Gulf as part of the USS Boxer (LHD 4) Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG). He then conducted the first LSD class Hull Swap with USS Germantown (LSD 42) in August 2002. Shunkwiler returned to the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations where he served as the head, East Asia and Pacific Branch, Maritime Security Cooperation Division (N52) and was the executive assistant, Expeditionary Warfare Division (N85).

## **Navy Focuses on Suicide Prevention, Awareness**

By MCSN Shannon K. Cassidy, Fleet Public Affairs Center, Pacific

CORONADO, Calif. (NNS) — The Navy is focusing its efforts to educate its Sailors about programs available to them during Suicide Prevention Month. During November, Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC) worldwide are educating service members about the risk and protective factors to help Sailors identify warning signs in their shipmates or trouble within themselves.

“Knowing the warning signs that someone is thinking about committing suicide will save a shipmate’s life,” said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) (SW/AW) Joe R. Campa Jr. “If you’re a leader – and specifically for the chiefs – you must know your people well enough so that you can tell if they start to change. Recognizing the signs of suicidal thoughts can help prevent future tragedies.”

According to the Department of the Navy Suicide Incident Report, suicide is still among the top three causes of death in the Navy “Compared to homicides, we’re killing ourselves more than other people are killing us,” said Dr. G. Bruce Schumacher, FFSC Clinical Life Skills educator in San Diego.

The first step in preventing suicide is to identify and understand the risk factors. Risk factors are anything that could increase the possibility that a person will harm themselves, such as alcohol or substance abuse, a history of depression or mental disorders, or the loss of a relationship.

FFSC offers annual General Military Training about suicide prevention, as well as Life Skills classes, that help treat and deal with the symptoms of such issues.

## Tarawa's new XO



**Captain David F. Bean**, a native of Glastonbury, Connecticut, graduated from Bowdoin College in 1982, received his commission from Aviation Officer Candidate School in October of that year, and earned his Aviator's wings in December 1983. His first operational assignment was with HS-8 at NAS North Island, California. While assigned there he deployed with Air Wing 14 (CVW

14) aboard USS CONSTELLATION (CV 64).

Following his tour with HS-8, Captain Bean reported to HS-10 as an instructor pilot, and in May 1989, was assigned to the Carrier Group SEVEN staff as Flag Lieutenant and Aide to the Commander. During his tour the staff was embarked in three different aircraft carriers and deployed to the Northern Pacific and Indian Ocean.

Captain Bean was chosen in January 1991 to serve as an intern with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and upon completion of the internship he was selected to attend Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, DC. In August 1993 he was awarded an M.A. in International Relations and International Economics.

Upon completion of his graduate work, Captain Bean was again assigned to HS-8. He subsequently made deployments aboard USS CARL VINSON (CVN 70) and USS NIMITZ (CVN 68). In November 1996, Captain Bean reported to the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, RI, and was chosen as Honor Graduate of the College of Naval Command and Staff the following year. After graduation from the Armed Forces Staff College in March 1998, he reported to Commander, U.S. Space Command for duties as Liaison Officer to the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization. During this tour, he served as the Commander's direct representative to the National Missile Defense Program.

In November 2000, Captain Bean reported to HS-6 at NAS North Island as Executive Officer and later assumed command in March 2002. During his command tour, the Indians conducted deployments in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. From August 2003 to July 2006, Captain Bean was assigned to the National Airborne Operations Center at Offutt AFB, where he served as an Operations Team Commander.

Captain Bean assumed the duties as Executive Officer, USS Tarawa (LHA 1), November 2006. Captain Bean has accumulated over 3400 flight hours. His personal awards include the Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (Two Awards), Navy Achievement Medal, and various campaign, unit, and sea service related awards.

# UCSD Intl. students visit "Big T"

Story and photos by  
MC2(SW/AW) Tony Spiker

Many international students come to America to educate themselves, but often times find themselves without a true understanding of American Culture. Sailors aboard USS Tarawa (LHA-1), played host to a group of over 60 International and American Students from the University of California San Diego, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. Crew members of the amphibious assault ship gave the students a tour of the ship, explaining its inner workings and capabilities

**Tour**  
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*Chief Petty Officer Gabe Puello, public affairs officer, explains flight deck operations to over 60 International and American Students from the University of California San Diego, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. Crew members of the amphibious assault ship gave the students a tour of the ship, explaining its inner workings and capabilities, giving the students a greater understanding of how the Navy and the Tarawa is able to carry out their mission.*



## **Tour** *from page 7*

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The students the Tarawa welcomed onboard are involved in a University Program called “American Pie, What Lies Under the Crust.”

Emily Maxon, director of International House at the La Jolla University, arranged the ship visit. “We study several topics designed to allow a greater understanding of America. This time our subject was the United States Military. This is not my first visit to a ship, but every time I come I

find it amazing.” The Students were shown various parts of the ship, including the submersible Well Deck, used for loading and



*Sailors played host to a group of over 60 International and American Students from the University of California San Diego, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. Crew members gave the students a tour of the ship, giving the students a greater understanding of how the Navy and the Tarawa is able to carry out their mission. Photo by MC2 Tony Spiker*

offloading Marines and their equipment, the Hangar Bay, ships flight deck, joint operations center and Pilot House.

“This ship is really amazing,” said Xing Yao, a student from China. “I have never been on a ship like this in China, it’s really great, and really helps

me understand the way American Culture works.”

“Touring and learning about the ship is fine, but the real benefit comes from meeting and speaking with the Sailors who live and serve aboard Tarawa. We were glad to open our doors to these International Students and hopefully give them a better understanding of the fine men and women their same age who serve on these ships,” said Chief Mass Communications Specialist Gabe Puella, Tarawa’s Public Affairs Officer. “Maybe a few years from now when they go back to their countries they will remember the friends they made on Tarawa today.”



## MM3 McGregor Sylvain



Service: **U.S. Navy**

Organization: **MP-2**

Duty Title: **Propulsion Engineer**

Hobbies: **Learning, history, working out and adventuring**

Favorite Duty Station: **Naval Station San Diego.**

Career Highlights: **Knocking out EOC and all DC drills during Ultra E.**

## ENFN Donald Weaver



Service: **U.S. Navy**

Organization: **Engineering A-DIV**

Duty Title: **Diesel Engineer**

Hobbies: **Plqyin basketball, riding dirtbikes, tattoos**

Favorite Duty Station: **Naval Station San diego.**

Career Highlights: **Training evolutions with inspectors.**

## SN Reon Greene



Service: **U.S. Navy**

Organization: **Deck**

Duty Title: **DCPO Tiger Team**

Hobbies: **Playing sports, reading and vidio games**

Favorite Duty Station: **Naval Station San Diego.**

Career Highlights: **Getting my surafce pin and being nominated for junior sailor.**

## COOL PIC

Sailors assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1) visit with retired U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Henry Carter and his wife as part of their community relations project at the VA Medical Center. The trip was part of the Tarawa's "Big T CARES" Program, a six-month community outreach program encompassing over 18 separate projects involving Tarawa Sailors. **Photo by MCSN Karalie Pallotta**

